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CONTENTS

Page

A Comparison of Attitudes toward Blindness — *Morton A. Bertin, Ph.D.* 1

Short Cuts in Learning Braille — *Hazel Elms* 4

Now I Have a Sister — *Mrs. Margaret Chandler* 11

A Conference on Guidance Programs for Blind Children — *Bob McQuie* 13

The President's Corner — *Donald W. Overbeay* 16

To Put It Briefly — *V. R. Carter* 17

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THE INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL FOR THE EDUCATION OF THE BLIND, INC.

A Comparison of Attitudes Toward Blindness

By Morton A. Bertin, Ph.D., Chief Psychologist*

Florida School for the Deaf and the Blind

One of the essential steps in scientific investigation takes place when the investigator draws a generalization consistent with the conditions imposed. A less rigid process occurs under nonscientific generalization, and both procedures have the same fundamental objective — to predict some activity or behavior. The difference between the two approaches lies within the restrictions, or absence of such, present in each case. With specialization has come a recognition that concepts previously regarded as facts are seldom invariant unless they conform to a variety of rigidly formulated controls. Thus the prototype of the jolly fat man as one who is always jovial and good-natured becomes acceptable only as a means to an end (note the recent caustic drawings of Kruschev, whose friendliness remains a surface quality). This sort of thing emerges as a matter of course from the desire to categorize for the sake of convenience. It becomes a simple matter to attribute inherent characteristics on the basis of more readily discernible factors. Race, religion, size, sex, shape of head, flatness of feet and others even more preposterous, become the vehicle for delivering, in one neat package, an overview of human qualities. Nor are the professionals exempt from this failing, as, for example, Lombroso's "criminal features," and Sheldon's "physical types."

Numerous investigators have concerned themselves with categorical thinking, and the social psychologist has, perhaps, taken the lead in setting forth experimental design and procedures for evaluating group stereotypes. Most particularly, he has attempted to determine the essential nature of such stereotypes, their degree of acceptability, resistance to change, and finally, the validity of such attributes. A literature has sprung up and new studies appear regularly in the psychological and sociological journals. It is, of course, beyond the scope of this paper to review these findings and research. Nevertheless, the attributing of traits on a wholesale basis is risky and generally unwarranted. Furthermore, it may be noted that the tendency is to accept norm characteristics and to regard exceptions as accidental and abnormal. As previously stated, the ultimate aim of scientific and nonscientific generalization is the same — to predict. The former, however, deals only within the limits of statistical probability; the latter seeks the security and dependence of invariance, whether justified or not.

We who work, or are intimately concerned, with the blind may experience feelings of amusement, despair, horror, boredom, regret, frustration, resentment, or any number of like emotions at the careless or deliberate lack of understanding frequently demonstrated by persons whose contact with this group is more or less fleeting. With increased experience, the professional worker usually attains a more tolerant recognition of the phenomenon, not as a specific distortion, but rather as a more or less characteristic response emerging as a mixture of emotionality and lack of information or, in some cases, lack of insight. Little wonder that there should be confusion concerning the intangible aspects of personality factors. Even such matters as

*Appreciation is acknowledged to Lee A. Iverson for his active participation, and to Mrs. Iris Palethrope, Thomas Swift, and Albert Rumph for their cooperation.

empirically measurable responses to brain surgery present an array of bewildering and occasionally incomprehensible data. For obvious reasons, this type of research has been carried out with sub-human species, wherein adequate controls and techniques could be instituted.

For example, it has been demonstrated that if the entire visual cortex is destroyed in dogs, the animals could still be taught to make light discriminations (1). The fact that the relationship is not a simple one has been shown by many investigators, one of whom (2) presented evidences that monkeys, after removal of the occipital lobes, could not respond to differences in stimulus brightness, but only to variations in the total amount of light entering the eyes. Thus, a monkey conditioned to respond to the brighter of a series of stimulus patches will choose a large dim patch rather than a smaller though brighter patch, provided that the total light of the former is greater. We are not here concerned with the neurological aspects of blindness, but it is not amiss to point out some of the complex factors operating within the total structure.

Cutsforth (3) compares the personality problems of the blind with that of the redhead of 50 years ago, "born into a world where his personality characteristics were already typed and fixed for him. Popular attitudes assumed that the child naturally would be emotionally unstable, fiery tempered, strong willed, inconsistent and undoubtedly over-sexed." He further holds that "the disability and incapacitation so commonly found among the blind have their origin not in the physical condition, but in the impact of the individual upon society and its attitudes." And, "society has formulated its emotional attitudes not towards blindness itself, but towards the reaction pattern of the blind towards themselves and their own condition."

This same author (4) points out the fact that the blind, contrary to the common belief, are not actually suffering "tormenting privation" from the loss of sight, though many, who have accepted the prototype as projected by the seeing, share in this fallacy. Cutsforth, blind himself, bluntly asserts that studies with the blind "show that there is no specific desire to see for the mere sake of seeing."

The Department for the Blind of the Florida School has instituted a program of therapy, both individual and group, according to the needs of the child. In general, children assigned to group therapy sessions are those who appear most likely to benefit by a process of group interaction wherein each is permitted, and even encouraged, to play a number of different roles. The atmosphere is permissive and children usually adjust (with varying degrees of flexibility) to the demands of social interplay in a structured yet undemanding situation. During one such session, the children, for their own enjoyment, were developing a thread of fantasy, and one asked the following question: "If you could have anything you wanted, what would you ask for?" To the writer, the surprising thing was that none of the seven children present fantasied anything dealing with their blindness. This represents, perhaps, a professional naiveté, for it appears, as Buell (5) has pointed out, that the blind find themselves forced into a false sense of deprivation, one which is completely foreign to their natural inclinations. Other therapy groups, stimulated by similar questions, reacted in the manner described above, and it is apparent that in the relaxed atmosphere of therapy, the children truly refused to accept the "burden of blindness" typically reflected by the seeing individual.

To this point, our assumptions have, for the most part, sprung from subjective rather than from empirical analysis. It is even possible that we, too, are guilty of accepting a stereotyped set of conclusions concerning the seeing individual's reaction to blindness, as well as the substance, degree of reality, and quality of blindness to

TABLE 1

		Person is worse off who can't:					Would choose to do without:				
	Normal	Feel	hear	see	smell	taste	hearing	seeing	smelling	tasting	touching
134	Boys	22	7	94	1	10	17	4	70	33	10
137	Girls	17	15	99	2	4	19	3	65	27	23
271	Total	39	22	193	3	14	36	7	135	60	33
	Percent*	*14*	*8*	*71*	*1*	*5*	*13*	*3*	*50*	*22*	*12*
	Blind										
43	Boys	14	11	11	1	6	11	18	6	3	5
29	Girls	9	10	2	3	5	2	17	4	3	3
72	Total	23	21	13	4	11	13	35	10	6	8
	Percent*	*32*	*29*	*18*	*6*	*15*	*18*	*49*	*14*	*8*	*11*

*Given to nearest hundredth

the blind. Doubtless we are dealing, to some extent, with factors too intangible for objective evaluation; in seeking to approach the problem experimentally we may, however, be utilizing a design better suited to valid prediction.

Our problem is to determine the value and relative degree of intensity with which the blind child and the normal child view blindness.

The Experiment

Seventy-two students (grades four through twelve) attending a residential school for the blind were given the following questionnaire:

Which person do you think is *worse* off, the person who:

( ) can't feel
( ) can't hear
( ) can't see
( ) can't smell
( ) can't taste

If you had to do without one of these, which one would you choose:

( ) hearing
( ) seeing
( ) smelling
( ) tasting
( ) touching

The children were brought into the room individually, and the questions were read twice. Each student made his choice and returned immediately to the classroom. The entire program was carried out in a single morning and no discussion was permitted until everyone in each class had been questioned, insuring independent replies. Printed questionnaires, identical with those read to the blind children, were given to 271 students attending regular public school (grades four through twelve). The teachers read the questions aloud once, and the children made their choices by checking the proper statement. The results are set forth in Table 1.

The significant feature of the results points to the difference with which blind children and seeing children regard blindness. Over 71 per cent of the normal children chose the blind person as being worse off, whereas only 18 per cent of the blind children made this choice. Likewise, 49 per cent of the blind preferred remaining blind to losing any other sensory modality, but only 3 per cent of seeing children made this choice. It is of interest to note that the blind children appear to regard loss of the capacity to feel or hear as the two most crippling disabilities, and it is possible to rationalize this response in terms of the utilization made of these modalities by the visually handicapped.

The data lend themselves to other com-

parisons, but the primary objective of this paper was to provide empirical and objective information concerning how blind children and seeing children regard blindness. It is apparent that a rationale for the pattern evolved could be readily established. Mildred A. Groht, an authority in the teaching of the deaf, has stated,* "I have never heard a deaf child who minded being deaf, because they really don't know the difference." After reading the second question some of the blind children chose blindness, remarking that they were accustomed to it, and would hate to trade for any other loss. It appears that, for the most part, the blind child is not as concerned with what he hasn't got, as much as he is with losing what he already has. Perhaps normal chidlren feel the same way, but it is obvious that the sense of comparative values is different. Out of our sample of 271, only 7 chose blindness as the preferred disability, the majority selecting loss of smell and taste as least crippling. It is possible that we are actually dealing with a choice between reality and fantasy. The blind child picks the known rather than the unknown. In this situation, the seeing child has no truly experienced known (of blindness), and he makes his choice in accordance with a value system and self-concept emerging from the totality of experiential constructs. The ultimate point appears to reiterate the need for scientific inquiry as opposed to subjective evaluation, particularly when the latter is as susceptible to emotion and distortion as is the concept of blindness to those who have never experienced it.

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Short Cuts in Learning Braille

By Hazel Elms

The obvious reason for learning Braille is to be able to read and write *Braille*. For the blind, the incentive is great as it provides a medium by which he can learn independently and can express his thoughts in a way they can be preserved, that is, by writing. He can receive much pleasure from reading and can become more like his sighted associates.

While the sighted person does not have the same incentive, he, too, has reasons for wanting to learn Braille. If he is a teacher of the blind, the advantages are many even though he is not a teacher of Braille. Miss Loomis in the introduction to her book, YOU CAN LEARN TO READ BRAILLE, says it is not necessary for the sighted person to know the system in order to teach a blind person to read. She may be right, but it is very hard to conceive of a person successfully teaching Braille without knowing it himself. The sighted person may be in some other field of work with the blind, where a knowledge of Braille is essential or, as is often the case, he learns it from a purely altruistic motive—to help all blind people by transcribing printed material into Braille.

Whatever the incentive, there is no doubt that any short cuts would be wel-

*Personal Communication

Miss Elms was a student of Dr. Paul C. Mitchell in Hunter College, New York City, at the time this study was made.

come. It is the aim of this paper to discover or develop some devices to assist in learning this system. It will probably seem that "anything goes," as some suggestions will appear most absurd.

We shall first discuss possible short cuts for the blind child who has never seen printed letters or words. The greatest help is for the child to be prepared to learn to read. This begins long before he starts to school. He should have been given all possible experiences and contacts with his everyday world. He should have been made as independent as possible. When he starts to school, many more experiences await him. We have all noticed the small child who pretends to read long before he knows a single letter or word. The pictures he sees in his books, the stories which have been read to him, the times he sees an older child or adult reading words from a book, give him a desire to do the same. And how pleased a young child is when he can find a word he knows in the newspapers!

It is not hard to see that the sighted child has much incentive for learning to read. But how is the desire developed in a child who cannot see? The individual teacher will find many ways and the child who has already been given many experiences and contacts has a head start. The pre-readiness program is most important. He must be given as many experiences in his new school surroundings as possible. Also, he needs to develop the ability to use his hands.

All this preparation for learning to read will prove to be a short cut in the learning of Braille. Mrs. Jiggets in her article "When Should Braille be Taught" says, "Teachers will find that the pre-readiness reading material now available will be most helpful in preparing the beginning blind child for the mastery of Braille reading and writing. The alert teacher will soon recognize many expressions of interest and ability in the child which will enable her to determine the proper time to begin the teaching of Braille."

Miss Jean M. Ellis in her article "The Role of the Preschool Counselor, describes reading readiness kits. She says, "The reading readiness kit consists of three parts. First, a folder of reading material for the teacher which includes articles giving a digest of science and nature experience, list of activities for developing tactual discrimination, a list of toys to develop finger coordination. Second, a series of envelopes containing shapes used for matching and sorting. Third, the book TOUCH AND TELL, which has four sections. She goes on to describe each of these sections, each of which have shapes or outline figures for recognition of large or small figures, left and right, and also actual shapes which can be outlined with the fingertips. A third section teaches location of top and bottom and left and right of a page. A fourth section has more than one line and teaches the proper finger movement for finding the beginning of a new line. First large dots are used and then actual Braille dots. Attention is also called to recognition of differences in arrangements of dots.

It would seem, with a liberal amount of time spent in the use of such available materials as described above, that the child would be well able to begin the study of Braille characters.

Howard Carleton Strickland has written an article "Braille at Royer-Greaves School for the Blind" in which he describes instruction to retarded students. The emphasis here is on individual instruction, adjusted to the intelligence, the physical capabilities, and the aptitudes of the students. The instruction is begun on a board with cells or holes in which wooden pegs are inserted to make letters of the alphabet according to the Braille characters. As the student progresses, he is asked to write simple words which are in his spelling lesson. He then goes to anagram blocks or to flash cards. The anagram

blocks have Braille letters on them, the characters being approximately the size of those found in books. When words are made with these blocks, the space between the letters is wider than is found in books. This helps give confidence to the pupil because he can distinguish between letters with a greater degree of accuracy.

Quoting from Mr. Strickland's article he says, "From the peg board some students progress to flash cards. These cards have words, the contractions through Grade II, phrases, and short sentences on them. These students are able to read Braille as they would find it printed in books. These flash cards help to build a vocabulary for the readers of THE ALICE AND JERRY SERIES which are used in our school. The words, the contractions, the phrases and sentences are taken from the readers."

He also says, "In our instruction of Braille, the students are given the basic positions and the numbers of the dots. Our students are encouraged to learn these positions and numbers. We do not insist that they learn them before they progress from one step to the next. Furthermore, we do not follow an immutable pattern of introducing the characters. One student may be shown 'for', 'g', and 'c' in that sequence. After 'c' he may be shown 'd' and 'f', 'e' and 'i', and so on. Another student may be shown 'a' and 'k,' 'b' and 'l,' 'c' and 'm,' and so on through the alphabet. Still another student may be shown the first ten letters, then how to make the second ten, and finally how to make the remaining six letters. This variation in the patterns of presentation of the Braille characters depends upon the student."

Any way you look at it, learning Braille is largely memory work. Many blind children are especially adept at memory work. However, they can be given clues and helps. They seem to have a facility for remembering the characters by number, which of course gives them the proper position of the dots. Whether the instruction of Braille is started by whole words or by single letters, there comes a time when he must know the formation of each letter.

One exercise which comes to my mind that might help in memorizing the individual letters follows: After a letter has been introduced, the position of the dots felt, and the number of each dot repeated, let the children dramatize the letter. A space on the floor can represent a page of a book. Decide where the top will be, the left and right sides, etc. Each child will have a number. We might start with only numbers one, two, four, five, concentrating on the first ten letters of the alphabet, though not necessarily in alphabetical order at the beginning. Suppose the letter is C, children numbered one and four would go to the top of the "page" and stand side by side. F might be introduced next with the child numbered two joining the others. Then G and so on through the first ten letters. Simple words could be spelled as *cab*, *dab*, *dad*, *be*, *bee*. After drilling the first ten letters, the second ten could be used, adding children numbered three, and finally the last six using number six. The above, of course, would be subject to experimentation and adaptation to the interest and capabilities of the children. It could be used as a game or contest between groups of children.

The International Journal of December, 1958, has an interesting article by Edna H. Schmidt on "Teaching Reading by Use of Word Games." Since the emphasis in this paper is on learning Braille and not the recognition or building of words, I shall refer only to the games which have as their purpose the recognition of Braille characters.

1. Braille contraction game

Words containing the following Braille contractions are written on cards: *ally* as in "Sally," *ation* as in "nation," *ong* as in "song," *ance* as in "dance," *ence* as in

"commence," *ound* as in "pound," *ount* as in "count." Children are asked to draw cards in turn, to read the word they draw, and to spell the word. The one with the most cards is winner.

2. Classifying words that contain, contractions ch, sh, th, wh, and st signs. The pack of cards for this game contains words including these five-letter combinations. The purpose is to accomplish two things: (1) to give drill on these five sounds, and (2) to teach children to recognize these contractions. Children in turn draw cards and are asked to spell and pronounce the word they draw. If they do this correctly, they retain the card. If not it is returned to the pack. The one with the most cards is the winner.

3. Prefixes

Five cards are distributed to each child on which are written words with different prefixes; e.g. "*be*fore," prefix *be*; "*disc*uss," prefix *dis;* "*com*mence," prefix *com.* A leaders calls a prefix, for example, *con.* Children who hold cards that begin with that prefix bring them to the leader. If a child brings a card with the wrong prefix he returns to his seat and retains his card. Children not holding cards at the end of the game are winners.

4. Suffixes

This game is played like the one with prefixes except that cards with words containing suffixes are used as "glad*ness*," suffix *ness*; "care*less*," suffix *less*; "beauti*ful*," suffix *ful.*

A method of teaching Braille to blind children by whole words is described by Miss Margaret A. Philips in her article "Most Effective Methods in Teaching Primary Reading and Phonics." She began by developing a Braille picture book containing six pictures of six different animals. Each picture lesson has three short sentences about the animal. First the picture of a dog was studied by outlining with the fingers. Some time was spent on this, getting the position of the body, the head, feet, and tail. Then they talked about names for the dog. The teacher suggested "Jip." She showed them the name in Braille in the center of each child's Boston drill board. Then other words were added —"see," "run,", etc.—and before long the simple sentence could be read. Of course, all this took a series of lessons.

I have found blind children often very interested in words, not because of their concept, but because of the way they sound. They will say, "That is a funny word" meaning it sounds funny. They are interested in the peculiarities of the English language; for example, it seems strange that *ph* sounds like *f*, or *ic* at the end of a word is a funny sound. They like to find rhyming words and to make up words. They are interested in antonyms, synonyms, homonyms, and alliteration. It seems to me we might capitalize on this interest in teaching Braille characters. We might take a basic word like *at* and put Braille characters in front of it to make as many other words as possible. Such as *bat*, *cat*, *that*, *chat*, etc. Or, we could correlate learning Braille characters with language lessons by introducing *their* and *there* together, teaching the child the use of each and at the same time having him learn the contracted forms. Children especially enjoy nonsense sentences with alliteration. Why not use these to teach the Braille characters for the alliterative letter?

There has been some controversy as to whether Grade 2 Braille should be taught to beginners. Miss Helen Ziegel and Miss Margaret Ostendorff have written an article which appeared in *The International Journal* of June, 1953, in regard to this. It was their opinion that beginners should not be handicapped by having to learn Grade 2 contractions before Grade 1½ is mastered. A number of very valid reasons are set forth. However, Grade 2 is definitely a short cut for reading and, since most publications are now put in Grade 2, it would seem advisable to teach Grade 2

as soon as possible, certainly by the time the child has reached the middle grades.

Little has been said about specific memory clues for the blind child learning Braille. It seems to be that the individual teacher can develop these as she observes the needs, background knowledge, and capabilities of the pupil. One that occurs to me that could be used is to think of the position of the dots as steps. For example *a* is alone on the top step. For *b* step down on the second step. Every step we touch leaves a mark (a dot). For *l* we step down to the third step; *k* we jump over the second step without touching it; *c* we slide left (or right depending on how the child is facing, but we should be consistent). Sometimes we step diagonally as *e*.

The subject of writing Braille will not be discussed as certainly the child has to know how letters or words are made before he can write them. However, it is a method of drill and helps to fix the letters in the memory.

The second section of this paper, "Short Cuts for the Sighted," will be in much less detail. Some of the suggestions which follow are original and some are those which have been given during class periods that have been helpful to me. They are applicable to the blind person who has previously had many years of sight.

After studying Braille for several weeks, the alphabet seems comparatively simple, especially the first ten letters. But even here certain clues are helpful. For example—*f* has a similarity to printed *f*, also *h* with middle cross bar. *D* seems to start forming a printed *d*. The fact that the second ten letters are made by adding dot 3 to the first ten might be a help to some. However, it has not been particularly helpful to me. Again, in remaining letters there are certain similarities to the printed letters—as L, P, O, R, X. There is no difficulty in distinguishing *ow* from *o*, both of which look like printed *o* because by the time one comes to learn *ow*, *o* is firmly fixed in the mind and we remember that *ow* is the other one! Z is one letter I have had trouble recognizing quickly, probably because we do not meet it so often. Therefore I think of it as *e* with dots 3 and 6 added which makes it "ez."

In studying the nine two-letter combinations, *ch*, *gh*, *sh*, *th*, *wh*, *ed*, *er*, *ou*, *ow*, I tried first to remember that they were dot 6 added to the first nine letters of the alphabet. That worked all right for the first two, then it wasn't so easy. So I now think—*sh* is the opposite of *m*. In the word "sham," *m* is at the opposite end of the word from *sh*. For *th*, I think "thump" —*th* is opposite *p*. *Wh* is made with dot 6 added to *e*, so I think whee! *Ed* is dot 6 to *f* so I say *fed*. For the others, I have no device.

In the compound part-word contractions, some devices given by different members of the class have been very helpful. Examples are: *ally*, preceded by single dot (6) like *a*, while *ity* is preceded by two dots; *ance* as distinguished from *ence*—the mouth is opened wider to say *a* than *e*, hence, the dots 4 and 6 farther apart are used for *ance*, and 5 and 6 closer together for *ence*. The same "reasoning" follows in distinguishing *less* and *ness*; *ation* is remembered as the only final contraction ending in *n* which has a single dot preceding, like *a*. In *ount* and *ound*, the distinguishing characteristic is the final letter. Double consonants are remembered because they are the same as the single consonant but in the lower cell.

There is no doubt that many, many devices can be developed as memory clues. However, it depends on the individual how many he can use. It still follows that the person with a good memory learns Braille more easily than the one whose memory is faulty.

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Appointments

The American Association of Instructors of the Blind has its first Executive Secretary with the appointment of Maurice Olsen in July. Mr. Olsen, 31 years old, has moved his family to St. Louis where his mailing address is presently 2363 So. Spring Ave., St. Louis 10, Mo. He and his wife, Betty Lou, have four children.

Mr. Olsen has his Bachelor's degree from the State University of Iowa, and a Master's degree from Iowa State Teachers' College. His professional experience has been as an instrumental music teacher in the Iowa Braille and Sight Saving School, and as a superintendent in the Iowa public schools.

In the "President's Corner" of this issue, President Don Overbeay discusses the significance of this newly created office. Readers shall also have an opportunity soon to read a personal message from the new Executive Secretary, who made this statement for publication in our first contact with him: "I will appreciate receiving names of people, books, articles, and sources; any general information concerning the field of the blind, historical or current; research projects completed, in process, or needed; and descriptions of pet projects or desired improvements in the AAIB or the field of the blind. The more the members of the AAIB help me with their correspondence, hopes, plans, and suggestions, the more I will be able to help the members of the AAIB."

Mr. Olsen is undertaking a big assignment, and we trust that not only the best wishes of AAIB members wil be extended to him, but their cooperation and active assistance as well.

The American Printing House for the Blind has announced the creation of a new position, with the appointment of Mrs. Blanche W. Dougherty as Textbook Consultant. The purpose of this new position, as assistant in the Braille and Large Type Editorial Department, is to provide full-time personnel responsible for compiling, evaluating, and determining the textbook needs of all blind children served through the Printing House under the Federal Act "To Promote the Education of the Blind."

Mrs. Dougherty comes to the Printing House with a rich experience in the education of the blind, as well as library service. She received her Certificate in Library Science at St. Louis Library; her B.A. and M.S. at the University of Arkansas, the latter with a major in educational administration and a minor in English; and has done graduate work in the fields of special education and sight-saving at Wayne and Ohio State Universities. Mrs. Dougherty began her career in the education of the blind as a teacher of intermediate grades at the Oklahoma School in 1927, shortly thereafter also taking over the teaching of high school English. She became Principal of the School in 1946, in which capacity she continued until June of this year. During these years, she was also Librarian and in charge of textbook acquisition, and also acted as coach for the blind high school pupils attending public schools in Muskogee. During World War II, she served as Librarian of the U. S. Station Hospital Library, Camp Gruber, Oklahoma. Additionally, for many years, Mrs. Dougherty worked in the Muskogee, Oklahoma, Public Library as Reference and First Assistant Librarian.

D. A. Hutchinson succeeded Robert Lambert as Superintendent of the Indiana School for the Blind, on July 1, 1959. Mr. Lambert has retired and is now living in California.

Mr. Hutchinson came to the Indiana School from the Iowa Braille and Sight Saving School where he had served as Principal for the last seven years. Prior to his Iowa position, he had held positions as teacher and as principal in the public schools of Iowa, Wisconsin, and the Canal Zone. Mr. Hutchinson's educational background includes a Bachelor of Science in Education degree from State Teacher's College, Whitewater, Wisconsin in 1942, and a Master of Science degree in 1950 from Drake University. Mr. and Mrs. Hutchinson have two children, Linda Lee, 12, and Robert, 8.

Now I Have a Sister

By Mrs. Margaret Chandler, Girls' Athletic Supervisor
Ontario School for the Blind

The sight of a "sister" is helping many of the girls at the Ontario School for the Blind in Brantford, Ontario, in an extraordinary experiment that has become an integral part of the school's activities.

It is extra-curricula activity, but its potential may be such that it has worked its way into an important place as much for the happiness of the students as for their education.

The last Thursday of the month is considered an eventful day for the girls. Known as "Sister Day," it has special significance for all of them from grades two to twelve inclusive. It has been aptly defined by one of the smaller pupils as follows: "It is the nice day that we do things with someone else that we'd never do if we didn't have a Sister Day."

Sister Day, as the name implies, is the day when every girl gets together with a sister for some activity. In this school, each senior girl has adopted a Little Sister who is a younger girl in the lower grades.

The Girls' Athletic Association of the Girls' Physical Education Department has sponsored this movement. The sisters have been paired in such a way that a totally blind grade twelve student would have a partially sighted grade two pupil and vice versa. Following the same pattern, a partially sighted grade eleven girl would likely have a blind grade three sister. As a result, there are apt to be several pairs of sisters half way between grades two and twelve. This would be around grades six and seven, depending of course on the number of girls in the classes. We call these couples the "Twin Sisters."

Once a month, on that anticipated last Thursday, the Sisters meet and together attend a special event starting at four o'clock. Only Sister couples are admitted.

These events are planned by the Executive of the Girls' Athletic Association. Each member of the Executive convenes a committee for one event. She, in turn, forms her own committee of two other senior girls plus the physical education teacher. In this way, gradually every senior girl gets the opportunity to work on planning and executing an event, yet no one student is overburdened with extra duties. In addition, a different housemother attends and in any way helps each month.

A review of the program this year shows that the activities have been varied. The September event was a "Get Acquainted" Hike when the brand new pairs of sisters were admitted. With the President of the Athletic Association leading, the Big Sisters paraded their Little Sisters to a nearby garden park. In groups of four, the girls were given time to explore as they wished. This was a completely new place for the Little Sisters. When a prearranged signal was heard, the girls gathered together and played group games. Then, still in couples, they slowly returned to the school, munching fruit and getting better acquainted.

In October, we had an Outdoor Sport Carnival. Two weeks prior to the event, a list of ten competitive contests was posted on the athletic bulletin board. In deciding on these contests, the average physical ability of the younger girl had to be considered. Each pair of Sisters had several little meetings which gradually turned into practice sessions. Eventually, each pair signed up for five events of their own choice. These included hopping for distance, bouncing the ball, tossing bean bags into hoop circles, bowling, skipping, jumping for distance, guessing the number of jelly beans in a jar and a mystery guess of

"Who is in the box?" The combined score of the two girls counted for each event. To further explain, in the broad jumping, Little Sister jumped and then Big Sister started her jump from the spot where Little Sister landed. The total distance of both jumps was marked on the scoreboard. This sport carnival gave the senior girls an excellent opportunity to train the younger girls in some of the rudiments of track and field competition.

November featured a Jingle Bell Tea-Dance complete with Christmas decorations. This was the first "real" dance for most of the junior girls. They showed their enthusiasm by gaily attempting every number. The program started with a grand march and listed a waltz, one of the more simple square dances, several polkas, Mexican hat rock, and some jive.

As the chief sport at our school is ice skating on the excellent natural ice rink, on request, the Big Sisters took their Little Sisters skating in January. This actually motivated the smaller girls to practice their skating as they did so want to perform well with their sisters. Then, in February, the Big Sisters taught the girls how to play "Braille Bingo" and lots of fun was enjoyed at a Bingo Party. To say "thanks" for all the nice things that their Sisters had done, the little girls staged a musical program as a surprise during a break in the Bingo games.

Coming up this spring is a Sport Night, starting very early in the evening, due to the strict bedtime for wee sisters. This will feature interviews with district young people all prominent in national sports. These include a member of the Canadian Olympic Girls' Swim Team, a big league football player and a hockey player. This will serve to widen their knowledge of national sports and to develop a keener interest in athletic events outside the school. A Red Cross swimming and water safety movie will also be shown. By popular request, a piper from a local bagpipe band has been asked to play, and the girls are going to attempt to dance a Scottish folk dance to his music.

In May, it is planned to have a Cross Country Hike of a suitable distance for the small girls. This will probably end in a "cook-out" supper by the river bank. Some of the pupils will thus get experience in preparing an outdoor meal which will be planned in correlation with the Home Economics Department.

It is to be noted that, with the exception of two events, the tea-dance and the bingo party, all activities have been held outdoors. This type of physical recreation emphasizes healthy companionship, physical fitness, and mental alertness.

Although we are still in the experimental stage, some very interesting reactions have been voiced by the participants. Little Sisters told in their own words why they like the Sister movement:

"I tell my Mommy I'm not alone at the school because now I have a Sister here."

"It gives me a better chance to get to know the older girls."

"It gives you something to do and something different to practice after school."

"It's fun."

"I love my Big Sister."

As would be expected, the older girls reacted with more analytical statements:

"Before we had Little Sisters, most of the high school girls had no contacts with the younger girls and so we never helped them, let alone enjoyed their company."

"It has made me conscious of the fact that I, although blind, can actually help some else who really wants my help and looks up to me."

"Because my Little Sister adores me, I had to perform a severe personal examination and now I feel that I'm a better person, both in my thoughts and my appearance."

"Little Sisters will eventually become Big Sisters and will be more willing and enthusiastic to help the smaller pupils."

The staff have reported several interesting situations, most of them outside the

realm of the Physical Education Department. A younger girl simply could not remember the four-times table and so she went to her Big Sister to be drilled as they promenaded up and down the sidewalk during the noon hour. The promenading had successful results. A little girl developed a sudden determination to keep her socks pulled up straight. It was discovered that Big Sister was very neat in appearance. However, it is not only the younger girl who benefits. A high school girl, noted for her lack of interest in physical activities, suddenly forsook her solitary reading and started practicing her physical education class assignments with astonishing vigor. It came to light that her Little Sister had performed a better Broad Jump than she had at the Sport Carnival! At the present time, a noisy, rebellious, partially sighted senior is gradually being mellowed into a more charming young lady with the unconscious help of a sweet, mild-voiced Little Sister who is totally blind.

From the viewpoint of the teacher in the Physical Education Department, admittedly the Sister movement does require careful and detailed planning. It demands attendance at many committee meetings where she is constantly suggesting, explaining, guiding, and painstakingly correcting. But such disadvantages are offset by the general improvement to the physical education program throughout the entire department. As the movement advances, the younger girls are gradually introduced to, and practiced in, various basic physical skills by their older Sisters. They gain confidence through their Sisters' encouragement, and this is very important to a blind girl. They have greater opportunities to participate in varied experiences, all of which helps to overcome that bugbear of the visually handicapped child, the fear of the unknown. As for the seniors, each girl is actually playing the part of a squad leader to one team member — her Sister. In such leadership, she is also checking her own skills, deportment, and self-discipline.

The potential in the Sister movement is a challenge! There is much evidence to emphasize its value in fostering good physical recreation and splendid fellowship in a school for the blind.

A Conference on Guidance Programs for Blind Children

Bob McQuie, Counselor

Missouri School for the Blind

Perkins School for the Blind was, on April 9-11, 1959, the scene for a conference on guidance programs for blind children. A few more than fifty teachers, administrators, psychologists, counselors, and other workers with blind children came from such scattered points as Ontario, Florida, and the state of Washington, and from many places between these points, to attend this inspiring and informative conference. The purpose of the conference was to provide assistance and support to those planning, conducting and/or participating in guidance services for blind children in a day school or in residential educational programs.

The conference opened on Thursday morning, April 9, with registration and well-planned tours of the Perkins School. The majority of the tourists found the

Perkins facilities and programs so interesting that they spent much time in a few places and asked that the tours be continued after the first program session that afternoon. Dr. Edward J. Waterhouse, Director of the Perkins School, graciously offered to serve as leader for this later tour. The visiting conferees were officially welcomed to Perkins by Dr. Waterhouse and his staff during the Thursday noon luncheon held in Dwight Hall.

The first meeting of the conference opened on Thursday afternoon in the staff lounge, with Dr. David V. Tiedeman, Harvard University Graduate School of Education, as the kick-off speaker. Dr. Tiedeman spoke on *The Purpose of a General Guidance Program*, discussing the child's need for establishing his identity and following this with the premises which underlie all guidance programs, the role of the counselor and his relationships to the administration and the other members of the staff, and the resultant school program which best supports the child in helping him to establish his identity. The counseling program might be expected to influence the total educational program of the school, at the policy-making level; counseling itself is designed to intervene in the life of the student, leading him into areas of thought and concentration which are thought to help him best reach out for his full identity.

The second speaker of the afternoon was Dr. Frederick Jervis, Department of Psychology, University of New Hampshire. Dr. Jervis spoke on *The Importance of the Self-Concept in the Development of the Blind Child.* He discussed some research that is going on in the area of the personality development of the blind adolescent, then moved on into a discussion of the self-concept theory, with its basis in the individual's need for self-esteem. The study cited by Dr. Jervis indicates that there is a much higher percentage of blind adolescents than sighted adolescents at the ends of the self-concept scale, perhaps due, in part, to the circulatory motion between what the sighted public thinks of blind individuals (not blindness itself) and what the blind individual really thinks of himself. Dr. Jervis indicated that there is a very rich field for research in this area and that we have only scratched the surface in our devising of measuring instruments.

After the members of the conference had enjoyed dinner in their various cottages, they were informally entertained by Dr. and Mrs. Waterhouse in a reception at the director's cottage, Hallowell House.

The second session of the conference opened on Friday morning, April 10, with Miss Eunice L. Kenyon, Executive Director, A Center for Blind Children, Boston, as speaker. Miss Kenyon's topic was *Diagnostic Techniques to be Applied with Blind Children.* She delved into the what-why-when-how-who of diagnosis, and, under the *who* phase, included on the diagnostic team the parents, houseparent, teacher, social worker, pediatrician, psychologist, and other specialists, as the situation warrants. Some of the various psychological tests used in diagnosis were mentioned and discussed. Effective diagnosis results in higher understanding, is continuous, and receives a contribution from each member of the team.

This session closed with a talk on *Application of Guidance Principles in a School for the Blind* by Mr. Carl J. Davis, Head, Department of Psychology and Guidance, Perkins School for the Blind. He went, at length, into the guidance program at Perkins, which is based upon the concepts that the school must maintain the integrity of the parent-child relationships (minimizing the school's role) and that every blind child should have as realistic a concept of himself as possible. He discussed the work of the guidance committee —director, principal, both psychologists, both social workers, speech therapist, head of deaf-blind department, and others, as

needed in a particular situation—which meets each Wednesday morning and often calls for a cottage meeting with houseparents and teachers to try to iron out the problems of a particular student. He talked of the problems met in instituting this program at Perkins, the roles played by the various members of the guidance committee, the Perkins testing program, and the weekly group guidance classes with eighth and ninth graders sectioned in small groups. In looking to the future, it was Mr. Davis' feeling that, as enrollments decline, it will become the obligation of schools for the blind to work more and more with the multiple handicapped blind child.

The third meeting of the conference opened on Friday afternoon with Mr. William Valdina, Needham, Massachusetts, Public Schools, speaking on *Group Procedures with Staff and with Parents.* He told of his group therapy work with parents and with teachers, these groups coming together voluntarily to deal with the emotions that separate us from others and from the deeper part of ourselves. He found the members of the groups moving toward one another and, thereby, toward the solutions of their common problems and often their individual problems, too. In starting a group, its make-up is the primary thing; subject matter is secondary. The group leader need not be highly trained—a teacher might well make a good group leader.

This afternoon meeting was closed by Mrs. Rachel Rawls, Psychologist, North Carolina State School for the Blind, as she spoke on *The Role of the School in Child-Home Relationships.* She indicated that the influence of parents in the residential school has greatly declined in recent years; parental interests should not be allowed to go to waste. The various problems found in establishing workable school-parent relationships were discussed and solutions to many of them suggested. The exercise of care and concern in dealing with parents will make for relationships that will prove most beneficial to the individual student.

The fourth and last session of the conference opened on Saturday morning, April 11, with Mr. Theodore Clapp, Newton, Massachusetts, Public Schools, speaking on *The Public School Counselor Works with a Blind Pupil.* In detail, Mr. Clapp told of his three years of work with a bright boy with many bad habits who was chosen to be the first blind youngster to attend this junior high school. This interesting report contained the whole gamut of parental concerns, work with Bill's teachers, the reactions of his classmates, and the seemingly never-ending cycle of progress and back-sliding and progress again. In summary, Mr. Clapp set down five criteria that he felt were necessary for Bill's success in this program: a brighter than average boy, a long-term relationship with one person, a tutor competent in Braille, ready resources for information, and full use of community resources.

This last session ended with a panel discussion on *How Guidance Procedures May Be Established in a Residential School for the Blind.* The panelists were: Mr. John E. Chiles, Principal, Arkansas School for the Blind; Mr. William English, Principal, Virginia State School for the Blind; Mr. Lee Iverson, Principal, Florida State School for the Blind. Each member of the panel discussed the workings of the guidance program, the resources being used, and the needs and future plans for a better program in his own school.

The conference hairman was Carl J. Davis, and his committee of assistants included Mary Hessel, John Belton, Nancy Knight, and the entire Perkins staff. It was a most successful conference and certainly achieved its purpose for all those who attended. Anyone interested in a fuller and more detailed report on this conference might write to Mr. Davis early in the fall.

The President's Corner

By Donald W. Overbeay, President
American Association of Instructors of the Blind

The American Association of Instructors of the Blind now has an Executive-Secretary and a permanent address for its national office. The Board of Directors of the AAIB selected Mr. Maurice Olsen (see page 9) as Executive-Secretary and accepted an invitation from the Missouri School for the Blind to establish an office at 2363 South Spring Avenue, St. Louis 10, Missouri.

The Nominating or Selections Committee of the AAIB — Dr. Eber L. Palmer, Chairman; Egbert N. Peeler and Dr. Robert H. Thompson — met in Lansing, Michigan, May 1-2 to establish criteria for screening candidates and to suggest areas of responsibility within which the Executive-Secretary would work. These criteria and duties of the Executive-Secretary were adopted by the Board at a special meeting at Batavia, New York, on June 13-15. The Board also approved a budget for the new position and office.

The Selections Committee moved with dispatch and skill. Applications were carefully reviewed. Personal interviews were held in Detroit on July 4 and final recommendations made to the Board.

The Board was polled by mail and selected Mr. Olsen. They also accepted the invitation of the Missouri School for the Blind to establish an office in St. Louis. Mr. Olsen assumed his new responsibilities on August 10.

As President of the AAIB, I have complete confidence in Mr. Olsen. He is an intelligent, energetic and personable young man who has had experience as an educator of blind children and as an administrator of public schools. With your interest and cooperation, he will be a superior executive.

The Board has asked Mr. Olsen to be responsible for many things. Here are a *few:*

1. Open, maintain and manage a national office.

2. Receive and disburse (co-signer with Secretary-Treasurer) all AAIB funds.

3. Devise and keep accurate records, furnish a fidelity bond, assist Board with budgets and be audited by a Certified Public Accountant.

4. Assist in elevating and maintaining high professional standards in programs under which blind children are educated.

5. Assist Membership Committee.

6. Seek additional funds.

7. Promote good public relations and friendly relations with sister organizations.

8. Affiliate with appropriate professional groups.

9. Act as chief liaison person between the AAIB, the Program Committee, the Coordinator of Workshops and other committees.

10. Establish and maintain a clearing house for useful, accurate and professional data.

11. Work cooperatively with the personnel of the American Foundation for the Blind, the American Printing House for the Blind, universities and colleges and all other organizations dealing with research in the fields of the visually handicapped.

Mr. Olsen has a big job. He earnestly seeks your help.

TO PUT IT BRIEFLY

News and Views from the Field

Journalistic adage: "Be brisk, be brief, be bright, be right!"

Dr. Frampton Named to Study Committee

Dr. Merle E. Frampton, Professor of Education, Hunter College, New York City, and Principal of the New York Institute for the Education of the Blind, has been named director of a special study of services to Special Education and Rehabilitation to be undertaken by the Subcommittee on Special Education, Committee on Education and Labor, U. S. House of Representatives.

The objectives of the study, according to Subcommittee Chairman Carl Elliott (D-Ala.) are:

1. To discover the unmet needs in these areas; to screen these findings with the purpose of suggesting practical ways and means of solving the most pressing of these needs.

2. To review and analyze the adequacy of services now available; to ascertain whether there is duplication of services and agencies, including waste of Federal funds, if any.

3. To prepare legislation, if necessary, to achieve the foregoing.

All areas relating to the education of the exceptional, physically handicapped, and their rehabilitation will be studied.

Services to the blind, deaf, speech defectives, homebound, cerebral palsied, mentally handicapped, and other related fields will form the basic content of the Subcommittee's field of interest.

Infant Visual Testing Device Invented

A device for testing the vision of infants and young children, which may lead to the early detection of abnormalities in their vision and prevent blindness, has been developed in the pediatric departments of the Boston University School of Medicine and Boston City Hospital.

Using the new device, the inventors, Dr. Sydney S. Gellis of Newton, Massachusetts, Professor and Chairman of the Department of Pediatrics at the University's School of Medicine and Director of Pediatrics at the Hospital, and Dr. John Gorman of Winthrop, Massachusetts, a Research Fellow in Pediatrics at the Hospital, have found that most newborn babies, thought to be almost blind at birth, have essentially 20/400 vision. This means that the baby can see at 20 feet what a person with normal vision sees at 400 feet.

The apparatus works on a principle known as "railway nystagmus." This refers to the eye movements of people watching telephone poles through the window of a moving train. As the poles go by the window, the passenger's eyes follow each pole as it moves by and then flash back to pick up the next pole as it comes into view. The testing device consists of a roll of paper with alternating black and white lines which passes over two rollers. The infant is placed beneath the roll of paper so that he faces the passing lines. The device is arc-shaped so that it covers the infant's entire field of vision.

By gradually reducing the width of the lines and by watching the infant's eye movements, the doctor can determine which size lines the infant sees and which he does not. The acuity of the infant's vision can then be calculated mathematically.

The roll of paper is placed about six inches from the infant because previous work has shown that infants are not capable of maintaining sustained visual fixation beyond eight inches. Allowances are made for crying, sleepiness or marked restlessness.

By early testing of children's eyes, Drs. Gellis and Gorman hope to be able to spot abnormalities in time to prevent blindness. Since previous testing devices required the subject's cooperation, they could not be used until the child was three or four years old. According to Dr. Gellis, if something is wrong with the way one eye focuses, the brain shuts out the impulses from the eye and in a short time the eye becomes blind. By spotting these small abnormalities early, the blindness may be prevented.

Since the subject reacts involuntarily to this new testing device, it can also be used to detect feigned or "hysterical" blindness.

Another advantage to this new method of testing is that it established clearly whether or not the infant can see. "If six doctors examined an infant's eyes with a light," Dr. Gellis points out, "three might say he was blind and three that he could see. This way there is no doubt. Once we see that eye movement, we know the child can see."

The research has been supported by the U. S. Public Health Service and the National Society for the Prevention of Blindness, Inc. Dr. Gellis and Dr. Gorman plan to continue their research and also to explore color vision in infants.

Methods Used in Teaching Clothing Construction and Selection

Since very few studies have been made relative to the subject of teaching clothing construction and selection to girls in schools for the blind, it was felt that one should be made with the following objectives in mind: (1) To check similar schools in the Southern and Eastern sections of the United States to determine to what extent clothing construction and selection are taught; (2) to survey some of the methods used; (3) to find out to what extent girls shop for their own clothes; and (4) to find out what methods have proven most successful in teaching color concepts, texture identification, and construction problems.

Questionnaires were sent to 25 residential schools for the blind in the United States. Nine of the schools sent very informative letters along with the questionnaires which were also used as data.

An analysis of the methods surveyed is shown in the following paragraphs. Since the methods for teaching the subject were similar in many of the schools, it is not necessary to list each one separately.

The conclusions drawn from this study are based on information gathered from the schools surveyed. It was revealed that the purposes of teaching the subject in schools for the visually handicapped should be: (1) To aid in creating an interest in good grooming; (2) to develop a sense of independence and achievement; (3) to develop muscular coordination; (4) possibly, to use as a means of occupation if learned well; (5) to serve as a means of developing abilities; and (6) to serve as a good leisure-time activity.

As reflected by the questionnaires, none of the visually handicapped girls shop independently. Several of the home economics teachers stated that their girls had no desire to shop alone. They prefer their mothers, sisters, partially-seeing classmates, or teachers to aid them in the selection of their garments.

Methods of teaching color concepts to visually handicapped students varied in different schools. Several schools accomplished this aim with the partially-seeing by the same means as that used with

sighted children.

Though students of normal vision are no longer expected to identify fabrics by inspection or simple test, some means of identification must be found for the visually handicapped. Recognition through touch and smell (burning test) are the most widely used means of identification.

The following were sent in as methods and devices for teaching the visually handicapped:

I. The teaching of color concepts
  A. Methods:
    1. Verbalisms in class discussion relating to primary colors, secondary colors, and color combinations.
    2. Verbalisms and comparing colors with sensations of the body, that is, red —warm and happy; green—cool and refreshing; yellow—sunshine, etc.
  B. Devices:
    1. With partially seeing students, the use of the color chart has proved effective.

II. Teaching texture identification
  A. Methods:
    1. Verbalisms pertaining to the weave, texture, and weight of fabrics.
    2. The use of swatches, whereby the girls are able to feel, cut, burn, and to test the laundering qualities and note the results.
  B. Devices:
    1. Mounted samples of material on braille paper.
    2. Small hand looms.

III. Selection and use of commercial patterns
  A. Methods:
    1. Aid from mothers, partially seeing schoolmates, or clerks in the store, in the selection of patterns.
    2. Reproduction of commercial patterns into Braille for totally blind girls.
    3. Transferring commercial patterns to brown paper patterns for partially seeing girls.
  B. Devices:
    1. Braille patterns
    2. Brown paper patterns

IV. Construction Problems
  A. Methods:
    1. Follow guide sheet instructions.
    2. Verbalisms pertaining to fitting and marking of patterns, making tailors tacks, assembling garments, etc.
  B. Devices:
    1. Braille guide sheets
    2. Sight saving guide sheet

V. Basting
  A. Methods:
    1. With thread basted on braille paper so that the girls can feel the length of the stitches and visualize the evenness of stitches.

Very few students selected their own patterns. In many instances they were guided by their mothers, schoolmates, or clerks in the store.

The partially seeing girls, for the most part, were able to follow the printed directions on the guide sheet. The totally blind girls could use the same sheets when brailled. However, they could not mount sleeves, put in zippers, join waistlines, and perform other complicated processes without individual assistance.

The totally blind girls not only stitched much straighter than the partially seeing girls but were much less afraid of piercing their fingers with the needle.

Recommendations

I. With the rapid development of new synthetics and synthetic blends, one is no longer able to distinguish fiber content by simple burning test, nor by touch. Since girls are always accompanied by a sighted person when shopping, it would be more beneficial if they accepted what was read to them from the label concerning fiber content.

II. The time spent attempting to identify fibers by simple test could well be used in teaching the students to know texture which can be recognized by touch. For example, a student would be able to feel a thin, stiff fabric of a plain weave and associate its name with organdy; a pile fabric with velveteen; soft fabric covered with loops on both sides with terry cloth; a smooth, slippery surface with satin, etc.

III. Teaching color concepts by verbalisms and comparing with sensations might be sufficient for learning names of colors. However, this method does not lend itself to teaching color as it is suited to the individual. Some method should be employed wherein students can learn that the color selected should bring out the best points of the individual and as nearly as possible subdue the undesirable characteristics.

IV. In teaching pattern selection, a good discussion in class on suitable lines for the individual and styles correct for the occasion would enable the student to shop for patterns more confidently.

V. Time spent by a teacher of comparable sighted children in preparation of classes demonstration and illustrations could be used by teachers of the visually handicapped for making Braille patterns and other material adapted to their use.

VI. Further study should be done on experimenting with Braille patterns. If this proved effective, there might be the possibility of Braille patterns being produced commercially.

Mrs. Gladys J. Hildreth,
Home Economics Teacher
Louisiana State School for the Blind

Meet the Resident Instructor

(Qualifications and In-Service Training)

Within the field, various designations are given to the people working for the children in residence. The term "Supervisor" suggests control; "Counsellor" is too confining for such a multi-faceted job; and "Houseparent" strives to usurp the aurora of the home. All seek to sound attractive, but none suggest the potentialities of the position. At Jericho Hill School, in Vancouver, British Columbia, the term "Resident Instructor" has become accepted.

It has been the practice in this school for many years to seek personnel for the residential staff who have more to offer to the children than the traditional custodial care. Because the school is concerned with the whole child — his schooling, health, mental and emotional welfare, recreation, and preparation for life in a seeing world — it is of the utmost importance that the people who guide and counsel him, who mould him to an accepted standard, be well qualified for this vital work.

The average resident child is awake one hundred hours a week. Of this time twenty-five hours are spent in school, fifteen hours at his meals and recesses, and the remainder within the extra-curricula programme of the school. The influence of the last mentioned can and should be a decisive factor in the growth and development of the child. Much depends, however, upon the qualities and qualifications of the staff concerned.

In my opinion, two factors are vital with respect to the personnel directly responsible. First, there must be sympathetic understanding of, and affection for, children in general. Second, there must be recognition of academic and practical training and experience, both within the field and in related areas, in order to retain and equitably compensate those in or entering the extra-curricular programme for resident blind pupils.

The particular personal qualities best suited for this type of work are not easily defined. At best, there can only be an incomplete list of characteristics to be sought. Careful screening of applicants will reveal their personal background. The natural

affinity some people have for children and other more or less abstract qualities are important intangibles in personnel selection. However, such factors as training and experience are reasonable indicators of personal interests and attitudes. At Jericho Hill School, the classification structure for resident instructors parallels that of the classroom teachers and is based upon the one to six years of university training required in public and special schools. However, in the case of resident instructors, consideration is also given for non-academic qualifications, such as those from agencies giving diplomas in child care and development, recreation, physical education, crafts, drama, music, and the like.

When the whole child is considered, the total contribution of the responsible adults cannot reasonably be confined to a high standard in one area and not in others. Physical, mental, emotional and social growth are constant and continuing processes, and a positive approach during all the child's waking hours can surely produce a better adjusted and more efficient adult.

This is not to infer regimentation or activity merely to keep children busy. In fact, in the light of individual interests, desires and needs, it suggests a physical education and recreation programme out-of-school hours of wide diversity catering to both groups and individuals. In effect, it calls for a professional approach which parallels that of the classroom and which can be a decisive complementary factor in the growth, development and education of the whole child.

In Jericho Hill School, the present enrolment of the Braille department is 65, of whom 38 are in residence during the week. (The average weekend sees this number reduced to 15-20 pupils.) The staff consists of 4 full-time and 2 relief resident instructors, plus 3 others shared with the deaf department in crafts and physical education. Of these, 4 have done post-graduate study in education, 1 is in the final year and 3 have university courses in special education, as part of the in-service training programme. Of the 9, 5 are fully qualified public school teachers. Further, and of equal importance, these are young, active men and women with an affinity in years as well as interest for children. Their average age is well under thirty.

The British Columbia school is some 2,500 miles from the next nearest Canadian school for the blind. A relatively small and widely scattered population cannot support too many schools. As a result, training centres are at a minimum in Canada, and experienced workers for the blind are a constant requirement. Civil Service regulations restrict employment to nationals and British subjects, and, as the field is limited, few recruits are drawn from Britain or the Commonwealth.

Consequently, for many years, an in-service training programme has been conducted at Jericho Hill School. This has consisted of summer schools, local lectures, reading of the literature and periodicals, teacher-instructor conferences and the like. However, it has been only in the past five years that the opportunities have been made available to the resident instructor staff to take special courses in the education of blind children, previously available only to teachers in the field.

When an in-service training programme includes university courses in special education, it follows that resident instructors, already qualified as public school teachers, may quite easily satisfy the requirements for teachers of the blind. In fact, this can be achieved with one additional summer session beyond resident instructor requirements to meet B. C. standards for teachers in special education. The problem of teacher recruitment, therefore, may be solved within the one organization, as it is in this school, by professionally qualifying resident instructors as potential teachers for the blind.

The purpose of any in-service training programme is to orientate new personnel to their job, and to further qualify them for self and job improvement. The programme for resident instructors at Jericho Hill School is based on 15 units in various areas, each unit representing 20-30 hours of lecture or study and follows approximately the additional year needed to up-grade teachers. The variation between the academic requirements of the two positions, teacher and instructor, is designed to advance those who elect to remain resident instructors and wish to acquire advanced standing as such.

The primary objectives of the selection and training procedures for resident instructors in this school are designed, as has been shown, to acquire the most efficient and effective services for the children's out-of-school activities, to elevate the position to professional status, and to develop a reservoir of qualified teachers within the organization. While the programme described may be considerably more expensive to maintain than the usual custodial type, it is most deserving and rewarding in our opinion.

Credit Details

A. — 6 Units

Teaching methodology and techniques employed in the education of the blind.

B. — 3 Units

Recreation Courses

1. Hobbycraft courses offered at approved centres.
2. Swimming — Red Cross Bronze Medallion (1½ units)
3. First Aid — St. John's Certificate (1½ units)
4. Approved P. Ed. courses offered at approved centres.

C. — 3 Units

Courses related to child care, adolescent psychology, mental hygiene, or the like.

D. — 3 Units

Orientation Course to include:

1. Lectures on the history of the education of the blind — the present over-all picture in Canada and the United States and related topics. (3 hrs.)
   (b) Lectures on educational psychology for the blind, causes of blindness and other related topics. (3 hrs.)
2. Classroom observation — (approx. ten periods) (9 hrs.)
3. Five book reviews from a prescribed bibliography. (60 hrs.) (List to be amended from time to time to include the most recent publications in the special field which is the prime concern).

In-Service Training Programme

TOTAL CREDIT requirement — 15 units.

Distribution of Credits

A.	Teaching methodology employed with the blind	6 units
B.	Recreation courses	3 units
C.	Applicable psychology courses obtainable by extension or summer school attendance	3 units
D.	Orientation courses and book reviews	3 units
		15 units

Provisos:

1. All courses taken towards the required 15 units must be approved by the Superintendent.
2. Acceptable courses completed in areas (A), (B), or (C) above, within a ten-year period prior to employment, may be considered for credit towards partial satisfaction of the requirements, provided that such courses had

not been taken into account for grade standing at the time of appointment.

3. After the first school year of service, suitable candidates may apply to the Superintendent for an assistance grant of $150.00 toward special training in San Francisco State College or some other approved centre.
4. Acceptable courses may be equated on the basis of one unit for 25 hours of lectures.

Eric R. Cardinall,
Chief Resident Instructor
Jericho Hill School, Vancouver, B.C.

Track Meet Results

During the final weeks of school last spring, tracks meets were held by four athletic associations of schools for the blind. We publish the results of these meets belatedly because they occurred too late to make the May issue deadline.

In the oldest association, the Eastern Athletic Association of the Blind (EAAB), participating schools finished as follows:

	EAAB	points
1st	Maryland	29
2nd	W. Penna.	20½
3rd	Overbrook	16
	N. Y. Institute	16
4th	Virginia	23½
5th	Oak Hill	10
6th	Perkins	5

Joe Kerr, who reported the EAAB results, stated that John Bowers and Leroy Elliott set a new two mile record (totally blind-partially blind team) of 11 minutes, 53.5 seconds.

More detailed reports were received from the other associations, and the best records comparatively will be published below. First, however, the team standings are shown.

North Central Association of Schools for the Blind

	NCASB	points
1st	Missouri	38-1/2
2nd	Iowa	34
3rd	Kansas	17-1/5
4th	Illinois	7-3/5
5th	Nebraska	6-1/5
6th	Minnesota	1/2

Southwestern Association of Schools for the Blind

	SWASB	points
1st	Arkansas	58
2nd	Texas	44
3rd	New Mexico	15
4th	Colorado	0

Southeastern Association of Schools for the Blind

	SEASB	points
1st	Florida	42
2nd	Louisiana	22½
3rd	Tennessee	14
4th	Mississippi	11½
5tht	Georgia	0

Little of Arkansas (SWASB) stepped off the best time in both the 50 and 75 yard dashes with 6.1 and 8.2 times. The standing broad jump event and hop-step-jump were both taken by Deas, a Florida boy (SEASB) with jumps of 10 ft. 1 inch, and 27 ft. 11½ inches respectively. Deas also wound up in a tie with Sykes of Missouri (NCASB) for the three consecutive jump event with 30 ft., 5¾ inches recorded by each boy in his respective association. The standing high jump best effort was made by Crabbs of Kansas (NCASB) in what is believed to be a national record of 5 ft., 2 inches. Shot put honors were also captured by a NCASB boy from Nebraska, Bonesteel, with 35 ft., 1¾ inches. Basketball throw (NCASB and SEASB only) went to Andrews of

Florida (SEASB) with 113 ft., 7½ inches. SWASB staged a football throw and Neal of Arkansas topped others in this event with a 133 ft., 7 inch record. Another event held only by SWASB was the one-half mile run in which Hudson of Arkansas posted the best time with 2 minutes, 25.3 seconds. The Southeastern association held two events peculiar to their association—the running high jump and running broad jump. In thees events, Carter of Florida took first in the broad jump with 17 ft., 8½inches, and then tied with Dillow of Louisiana for high jump honors with 5 ft., 1 inch (which still lacked an inch of equalling Crabb's standing high jump record for Kansas (NCASB).

New APH Appointment

One of the finest educators of blind children, and a person one enjoys knowing, is a new appointee at the American Printing House for the Blind, Mrs. Blanche W. Dougherty. It pains me to write this, since Mrs. Dougherty, until last May 31st, was Principal at the Oklahoma School for the Blind — my school. Our loss is gain for the APH.

Mrs. Dougherty will be working with Miss Hooper and the Publications Committee, and in liaison with schools and classes for the blind, and the various departments of education in the states. Her long experience as a librarian and teacher of English and elementary subjects, and her educational background, well qualify her for almost anything Mr. Finis Davis, good Superintendent of the APH, can dream up. One can also see what I mean when I say that our loss is gain for the APH. Our secondary consolation is that we got 30 good years of Mrs. Dougherty's time, and we don't begrudge Mr. Davis another 30 or so, but we've found a mighty large pair of shoes left empty in the principal's office of this school (figurative language). And, our primary consolation lies in the fact that she will be able to render service to a greater number in our special field.

V. R. Carter, Editor
The International Journal for the Education of the Blind

Dates to Remember

1959

Oct. 20-21—National Braille Club, Third Annual Conference, New York Guild for Jewish Blind, New York, New York.

Oct. 22—American Foundation for the Blind, Annual Meeting and Foundation Day, New York, New York.

Oct. 24-26—American Association of Instructors of the Blind, Meeting of Executive Board, Louisville, Kentucky.

Oct. 24-27—American Printing House for the Blind, Annual Meeting of Board of Trustees, Louisville, Kentucky.

Nov. 15-18—Council for Exceptional Children, Regional Conference (Eastern United States and Canada), Sheraton-Biltmore Hotel, Providence, Rhode Island.

1960

Apr. 19-23—Council for Exceptional Children, International Conference, Hotel Biltmore, Los Angeles, California.

June 26-30—American Association of Instructors of the Blind, 45th Biennial Convention, Tennessee School for the Blind, Nashville, Tennessee.

Jn. 26-Jy. 3—National Education Association, Annual Convention, Los Angeles, California.

Sept. 11-16—American Association of Workers for the Blind, 34th Convention, Hotel Saxony, Miami Beach, Florida.

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